

## Andrew Jackson to Martin Van Buren, April 12, 1831, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### TO SECRETARY VAN BUREN.

Washington, April 12, 1831.

*Dear Sir,* Your letter resigning the office of Secretary of State, was received last evening. I could indeed wish that no circumstance had arisen to interrupt the relations which have for two years, subsisted between us, and that they might have continued through the period during which it may be my lot to remain charged with the duties which the partiality of my countrymen has imposed upon me. But the reasons you present are so strong that, with a proper regard for the considerations which you urge, I cannot ask you, on my own account, to remain in the cabinet.

I am aware of the difficulties you have had to contend with, and of the benefits which have resulted to the affairs of your Country from your continued zeal in the arduous tasks to which you have been subjected. To say that I deeply regret to lose you, is but feebly to express my feelings on the occasion.

When called by my country to the station which I occupy, it was not without a deep sense of its arduous responsibilities and a strong distrust of myself that I obeyed the call; but, cheered by the consciousness that no other motive actuated me than a desire to guard her interests and to place her upon the firm ground of those great principles which, by the wisest and purest of our patriots, have been deemed essential to her prosperity, I ventured upon the trust assigned me. I did this in the confident hope of finding support of advisers able and true, who, laying aside every thing but the desire to give new vigor to

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the vital principles of our Union, would look with a single eye to the best means of effecting this paramount object. In you, this hope has been realized to the utmost. In the most difficult and trying moments of my administration, I have always found you sincere, able and efficient, anxious at all times to afford me every aid. If however from circumstances in your judgment sufficient to make it necessary, the official ties subsisting between us must be severed, I can only say that this necessity is deeply lamented by me. I part with you only because you yourself have requested me to do so, and have sustained that request by reasons strong enough to command my assent. I cannot, however, allow the separation to take place without expressing the hope that this retirement from public affairs is but temporary, and that if in any other station the Government should have occasion for services the value of which has been so sensibly felt by me, your consent will not be wanting.

Of the state of things to which you advert, I cannot but be fully aware. I look upon it with sorrow, and regret it the more because one of its first effects is to disturb the harmony of my cabinet. It is, however, but an instance of one of the evils to which free governments must ever be liable. The only remedy for these evils as they arise, lies in the intelligence and public spirit of our common constituents. They will correct them; and in this there is abundant consolation. I cannot quit this subject without adding that, with the best opportunities for observing and judging, I have seen in you no other desire than to move quietly on in the path of your duties, and to promote the harmonious conduct of public affairs. If on this point, you have had to encounter detraction, it is but another proof of the utter insufficiency of innocence and worth to shield from such assaults.

Be assured that the interest you express in my happiness, is most heartily reciprocated, that my most cordial feelings accompany you, and that I am very sincerely your friend